

88 POPULAR CULTURE IN KARNATAKA

and ritualism in religion and a too arduous pursuit of worldly prosperity. It preached instead devotion to God and recognition of spiritual values. It preached also that the better life was not meant for a few people but was meant for all and should be striven after by all. It has been sometimes said that the Dasas preached in differentism and quiescence and removed the impulse to work in the world by decrying individual effort and emphasising the doctrine of *Karma*. It is true that single lines and sometimes pieces seem to speak in this strain. Possibly, particular Dasas preach only such doctrine and no other. The accusation, however, cannot be made against the whole school. All teaching has to be understood with reference to the circumstances in which it arose. It should also be remembered that these songs are lyric and the idea in each depends on the incident which gave it birth. At a time of prosperity when addressing men who had enough to eat a teacher may well say: "Do not think your bodies are eternal. Remember you have a soul. Eating and drinking are not the whole of **life**." To a generation that has more hunger than food this advice not to love the world's pleasures too much naturally seems mockery. We should see that the advice was not meant for this generation. Even

when it was given it was meant for the
full man not
the hungry one. It applies to-day to the
full man.
So far from preaching quiescence the songs
prescribe
the doing of good deeds. It may be
objected that this
was recommended as a means of acquiring
merit and
not for its own sake. The motive was
suggested for the
common man who could be srot to do such
work only